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Item 10 of the provisional agenda*
Regional cooperation

Regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

Summary

The present report contains resolutions and decisions adopted at the recent sessions of the regional commissions of 1999 and 2000. During the first half of 2000, three of the five regional commissions held their regular sessions: the Economic Commission for Europe held its fifty-fifth session at Geneva from 3 to 5 May and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific held its fifty-sixth session at Bangkok from 1 to 7 June. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which holds its sessions on a biennial basis, met for its twenty-eighth session at Mexico City from 3 to 8 April. The Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which also hold their sessions on a biennial basis, did not meet in 2000.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Council

A. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

1. At its fifty-sixth session, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) approved the following draft resolutions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council:

Draft resolution I
Amendment of the terms of reference of the Commission: inclusion of Georgia in the geographical scope of the Commission and its admission as a member of the Commission

The Economic and Social Council,

Noting the recommendation of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific that Georgia be included in the geographical scope of the Commission and be admitted as a member of the Commission,

1. *Approves* the recommendation of the Commission that Georgia be included in the geographical scope of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and admitted as a member of the Commission;

2. *Decides* to amend paragraphs 2 and 3 of the terms of reference of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific accordingly.

Draft resolution II
Decade of Greater Mekong Subregion Development Cooperation, 2000-2009

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the responsibility of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for initiating and participating in measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic reconstruction and development of Asia and the Pacific, and for raising the level of economic activity in Asia and the Pacific,

Noting the large membership and diverse needs of the region and considering it essential for the secretariat to sharpen the focus of its programme of work so as to support subregional initiatives and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes established at the subregional level,

Acknowledging the importance of having a concerted strategy and close coordination among member countries of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific region and the relevant development agencies, as well as the development frameworks concerned, to promote cooperation among the countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion in enhancing economic and social development and poverty alleviation in the area,

Recognizing the need to strengthen the capacity of the countries in the Greater Mekong Subregion as a means to help to narrow the large development gap between countries in the region,

Noting with appreciation the contribution made by the secretariat to various development programmes in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific region, including the Greater Mekong Subregion, and the high level of support extended to the secretariat in that endeavour by other concerned United Nations bodies and the specialized agencies,

Welcoming the statement of the Ninth Conference on the Programme of Economic Cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion, held in Manila in January 2000, and in particular the determination expressed by the ministers to redouble their initiatives to accelerate, strengthen and extend regional cooperation within the subregion,

Noting with appreciation the continued financial support given by United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies and the Asian Development Bank to a number of development programmes for countries in the subregion under the Greater Mekong Subregion framework, some of which have been undertaken in collaboration with the secretariat,

Recognizing the important role of the Mekong River Commission, now implementing, through its secretariat, the 1995 Agreement on the Cooperation for the Sustainable Development of the Mekong River Basin, in pursuance of an economically, socially just and environmentally sound Mekong River basin,

1. *Calls upon* the concerned regional members and associate members:

(a) To reaffirm their commitment to the development programmes in the Greater Mekong Subregion through existing bodies, including the Mekong River Commission;

(b) To review jointly the existing development strategies with a view to developing a more concerted and rational approach that could respond effectively to the challenges of globalization while avoiding duplication of efforts in the development of the Greater Mekong Subregion;

(c) To continue to work closely together to ensure that development cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion is being pursued in a complementary manner;

(d) To formulate the development programmes in such a way that the private sector is encouraged to support them;

2. *Proclaims* the Decade of Greater Mekong Subregion Development Cooperation, 2000-2009, in order to draw the attention of the international community to the intensification of economic and social development in the subregion and to encourage its support thereof;

3. *Requests* the General Assembly to endorse the present resolution and to encourage, at the global level, support for its implementation;

4. *Urges* member countries, and international and intergovernmental organizations and institutions, to strengthen cooperation with and assistance to Greater Mekong Subregion development programmes;

5. *Encourages* donor Governments and agencies, regional and international financial institutions, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to assist countries in the Greater

Mekong Subregion in their capacity-building to enable them to integrate effectively into the regional and global economy;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To help mobilize the necessary resources to provide technical assistance and assistance in other areas that may be deemed necessary, upon the request of various Greater Mekong Subregion development frameworks, particularly in such key sectors as human resources development, trade and investment, transportation and communication, poverty alleviation and social development;

(b) To call necessary meetings among the parties concerned to design a work programme for the development of the Greater Mekong Subregion with the aim of achieving a tangible result in the given period;

7. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to monitor the overall programmes of various framework activities in order to report to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its annual sessions and to all concerned member countries, and to evaluate the implementation of the programmes every three years until the end of the Decade.

Draft resolution III
Regional cooperation on space applications for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific resolution 51/11 of 1 May 1995[1] on regional cooperation on space applications for environment and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, in which the Commission endorsed the recommendations of the first Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Development in Asia and the Pacific, held in Beijing in September 1994, and the Beijing Declaration on Space Technology Applications for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 51/123 of 13 December 1996 on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, in which the Assembly, *inter alia*, emphasized the need to increase the benefits of space technology and its applications and to contribute to an orderly growth of space activities favourable to sustainable development,

Recalling further the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), held in Vienna in July 1999,[2]

Recalling the decision of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its fifty-fifth session in April 1999 to hold the Second Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific in New Delhi in November 1999,

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 17* (E/1995/37), chap. IV.

[2] See A/CONF.184/6.

Noting with satisfaction the success of the Second Ministerial Conference, which adopted the Delhi Declaration on Space Technology Applications in Asia and the Pacific for Improved Quality of Life in the New Millennium, and the Strategy and Action Plan on Space Technology Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific for the New Millennium, and which launched phase II of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development,

Reiterating the strong interest of members and associate members in participating in the cooperative activities that will emerge from phase II of the Regional Space Applications Programme and their commitment to contributing to those activities,

Recognizing the essential role of space technologies and their applications in environment and natural resources management, food security and agricultural systems, capacity-building, human resources development and education, poverty alleviation, natural disaster reduction, health care and hygiene, and sustainable development planning towards improving the quality of life,

Recalling the efforts of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in promoting space applications for sustainable development in the region and its commitment to continuing to play a pivotal and catalytic role in that regard,

1. *Endorses* the recommendations of the Second Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, held in New Delhi in November 1999;

2. *Also endorses* the Delhi Declaration on Space Technology Applications in Asia and the Pacific for Improved Quality of Life in the New Millennium, and the Strategy and Action Plan on Space Technology Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific for the New Millennium;

3. *Calls for* the early implementation of the Delhi Declaration, the Strategy and Action Plan, and other recommendations of the Second Ministerial Conference;

4. *Encourages* all members and associate members to participate actively in phase II of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development and to initiate effective national implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan;

5. *Recommends* that the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee on the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development, under the purview of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Development, advise as appropriate on the implementation of the Programme, and invites members and associate members to enhance their representation on the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee;

6. *Invites* all United Nations bodies and agencies concerned, and multilateral donors and international agencies, to provide technical and financial support for the implementation of the recommendations of the Second Ministerial Conference, the Delhi Declaration, and the Strategy and Action Plan envisaged for phase II of the Regional Space Applications Programme;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord due priority to the activities proposed in the Strategy and Action Plan and to incorporate the Regional Space Applications Programme in the biennial work programmes;

(b) To strengthen the capability of the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to support the regional cooperative network towards successful implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan;

(c) To mobilize resources for technical cooperation activities in line with the recommendations of the Second Ministerial Conference, the Delhi Declaration and the Strategy and Action Plan;

(d) To report to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of these recommendations.

B. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

2. At its twenty-eighth session, held at Mexico City from 3 to 7 April 2000, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean approved the following draft resolutions requiring action by the Economic and Social Council:

Draft resolution I
Establishment of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries,[3] which was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 33/134 of 19 December 1978,

Bearing in mind the decisions adopted at the tenth session of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 5 to 9 May 1997, particularly decision 10/1 B,[4] on the review of the progress made in the implementation of the new directions strategy for technical cooperation among developing countries,

Considering that insofar as technical cooperation in the field of statistics is concerned, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean has been cooperating systematically to facilitate inter-institutional coordination among developed countries, international organizations, and national statistical offices in member countries that carry out technical cooperation projects,

Bearing in mind, on the one hand, that since 1994, the Organization of American States has collaborated with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in the organization of the Joint Organization of American

[3] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

[4] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (E/52/39), annex I.

States/Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Meeting on Statistical Matters and, on the other, that, in its resolution No. 34 of 8 October 1998, the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development of the Organization of American States, decided to put an end to the existence, within the Organization of American States, of the Inter-American Statistical Conference, whose Permanent Executive Committee had been the counterpart to the Commission in the Agreement on Cooperation in Statistical Matters between the Organization of American States and the Commission, and, moreover, that the Organization of American States has asked its member countries to bring the coordination of statistical matters into a single entity within the framework of the Commission,

Bearing also in mind that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean has been including the Joint Organization of American States/ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Meeting on Statistical Matters in its programme of work, and that therefore the technical, operational and financial implications of establishing a Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean as one of its subsidiary bodies can be dealt with by reallocating existing regular budgetary resources,

Considering that by its resolution No. 34, the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development had entrusted the representatives of the statistical offices of Canada, Mexico and Peru, and the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean with the task of preparing a proposal on the organization and operation of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the content of which was improved and approved by consensus at the Meeting of Directors of Statistics of Latin America and the Caribbean held at Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean headquarters in Santiago, Chile, from 24 to 26 March 1999,

Recalling Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolution 489 (PLEN.19), on the intergovernmental structure and functions of the Commission, in which the Commission recommended that the current institutional structure of ECLAC should be maintained; Commission resolution 553 (XXVI),[5] on the reform of the United Nations and its impact on the Commission, in which the Commission recommended that the current pattern of conferences of the Commission system should be continued; and Commission resolution 573 (XXVII),[6] on technical cooperation among developing countries and regions,

Having examined the proposal on the establishment of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which is contained in the annex to the present resolution,

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[5] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 17* (E/1996/37), chap. III, sect. F.

[6] Ibid., *1998, Supplement No. 2* (E/1998/41), chap. III, sect. G.

Considering, finally, the nature of and the objectives set forth in the proposal on the establishment of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,[7]

1. *Approves* the proposal on the establishment, as one of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, as set forth in the annex to the present resolution, with the observations and suggestions included in the report of the Commission on its twenty-eighth session;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit for consideration by the relevant United Nations bodies such proposals as may be necessary for the establishment of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;

3. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report on the fulfilment of the present resolution at the twenty-ninth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Annex

Establishment of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

I. Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

1. Nature

The Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean shall be a subsidiary body of the Commission that shall contribute to the progress of policies on statistics and statistical activities in the countries of the region.

2. Objectives

(a) To promote the development and improvement of national statistics and work to ensure that they are comparable internationally, bearing in mind the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission, the specialized agencies and other relevant organizations;

(b) To promote international, regional, and bilateral cooperation among national offices and international and regional agencies;

(c) To draw up a biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, to meet the demands of the countries of the region, subject to the availability of resources.

[7] Informe Final de la Reunión de Directores de Estadística de las Américas (LC/L.1199 (Sem.88/10)).

3. Membership

All countries that are members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean are members of the Conference.

4. Meetings of the Conference

The Conference shall hold its regular meetings every other year. The Conference may accept an invitation from a member Government to hold its regular meeting in that country.

5. Membership of the Executive Committee

The Conference shall elect an Executive Committee, in accordance with the regulations established by the Commission. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee shall also preside over the meetings of the Conference. The Executive Committee is empowered to convene a special meeting in the interval between regular meetings.

6. Secretariat

The secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean shall serve as the secretariat of the Conference. The secretariat shall make available to the Conference such documents and facilities as have been approved by the Commission.

II. Executive Committee of the Conference

1. Nature

The Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean shall set up an Executive Committee to support the Conference, as set forth in section 4 below.

2. Composition

The Executive Committee shall be made up of a Chairperson and six members. Its members shall be elected from among the member countries of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Special attention shall be paid to ensuring that the subregional groups of countries are represented on the Committee.

3. Election of the Executive Committee and duration of mandates

At the beginning of each Conference, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, in consultation with the members of the Executive Committee and of the Conference, shall draw up a proposal on the election of the new Committee.

The newly elected Executive Committee shall take up its duties once the regular meeting of the Conference that elected it is over, and shall remain in office until the end of the next regular meeting.

The members of the Executive Committee, including the Chairperson, shall be elected by the Conference at its regular meeting, for a term of two years.

The members of the Committee may be re-elected for three successive terms. The Chairperson may not be re-elected in that office for a second consecutive term,

but may be elected as a member of the Committee. Anyone who has been a member of the Committee for three successive terms may be elected again after two years have elapsed since the end of that person's last mandate.

4. Duties

The Executive Committee shall have the following duties:

(a) To carry out the tasks assigned to it by the Conference;

(b) To draw up, every two years, a biennial programme of activities of regional and international cooperation on statistical matters, to be submitted at the regional meeting;

(c) To follow-up on the implementation of the agreements reached at the Conference and the tasks entrusted to it by the Conference, particularly the biennial programme of activities referred to in section I.2 (c) above;

(d) To decide on the documentation required for its meetings. As a general rule, no substantive discussion shall be initiated unless an appropriate document is available. The secretariat shall be responsible for facilitating compliance with this rule.

5. Meetings

The Executive Committee shall meet at least twice during the interval between regular sessions of the Conference. At the meeting preceding the Conference, it shall approve a biennial programme of activities of the Conference, which shall be presented at the regular meeting.

The Committee may invite to its meetings any countries or experts who can make a contribution to the fulfilment of its duties.

Draft resolution II
Place and date of the next session

The Economic and Social Council,

Bearing in mind paragraph 15 of the terms of reference of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and rules 1 and 2 of its rules of procedure,

Considering the invitation of the Government of Brazil to hold the twenty-ninth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in that country,

1. *Expresses its gratitude* to the Government of Brazil for its generous invitation;

2. *Accepts* this invitation with pleasure;

3. *Approves* the holding of the twenty-ninth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean during the first half of 2002.

II. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

A. Economic Commission for Europe

3. At its fifty-fifth session, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) adopted unanimously its annual report covering the period from 7 May 1999 to 5 May 2000. The matters set out below, taken from that report, are brought to the attention of the Council.

Operational activities: rethinking the strategy

4. ECE agreed that priority should continue to be given to demands for assistance from the most vulnerable transition economies, particularly those belonging to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Balkan countries. It also agreed that the decisions on the basis of which operational activities were selected and given priority should take into account guidance from intergovernmental discussions and be based on actual ECE expertise, and reflect the recommendations of the external auditors. There was general agreement that ways to strengthen the Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities should be exploited in order to facilitate its work in terms of selection, prioritization and evaluation of its activities.

5. ECE also welcomed the secretariat's initiative with regard to developing joint projects with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the Mediterranean region, as well as with ESCAP. It requested the secretariat to pursue its discussions with ECA and ESCWA after holding consultations with member countries to determine the areas of cooperation with the other two regional commissions. Some countries specifically requested to be informed by the secretariat in detail and in advance concerning the secretariat's tentative proposals in this field.

Report on the work of the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work

6. ECE endorsed the recommendation that biennialization would not be in its best interests at the present time. It requested the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work to consider whether any improvements should be made to the format of the annual session of the Commission and agreed that any recommendations arising from such deliberations should be submitted to an Ad Hoc Informal Meeting of the Commission later in the year.

B. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Regional perspective on energy for sustainable development

7. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) noted that energy was a crucial input to economic and social development and improved quality of life, and that the energy sector was one of the major contributors to the deteriorating quality of the environment in the Asian and Pacific region. ESCAP also noted the report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development (E/CN.17/2000/12), held in New York in March 2000, which recognized the need for the active exchange of information on energy and sustainable development leading to the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and the importance the

Intergovernmental Group of Experts attached to regional cooperation in addressing the challenges of energy for sustainable development as well as the potential role of the regional commissions in providing a regional perspective thereon.

8. In recognition of the above considerations, ESCAP decided to hold a high-level regional meeting on energy for sustainable development and welcomed the offer of the Government of Indonesia to host the meeting. It urged all members, associate members, United Nations bodies and concerned agencies, regional institutes and organizations, and civil society to participate actively in the preparations for the meeting as well as in the meeting itself. ESCAP requested the secretariat to organize the high-level regional meeting on energy for sustainable development during November/December 2000 and to initiate substantive preparation for the meeting, in collaboration with the Government of Indonesia and other regional agencies and organizations, and in cooperation with the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development. It also requested the secretariat to ensure effective coordination among Governments, relevant regional institutions and civil society to enable them to participate in and contribute to the meeting and to report to ESCAP at its fifty-seventh session on the outcome of the high-level regional meeting.

C. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

9. At its twenty-eighth session, held from 3 to 7 April 2000, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean adopted one resolution of particular interest to the Economic and Social Council.

Resolution 582 (XXVIII)
Mexico resolution on equity, development and citizenship

10. In resolution 582 (XXVIII) entitled "Mexico resolution on equity, development and citizenship", the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean welcomed the main document presented by the secretariat entitled "Equity, development and citizenship" inasmuch as it reinforced the idea that development was an integral process, regarded equity as the central pillar of the reorientation of the region's development pattern and brought to the forefront the validity of economic, social and cultural rights and their interdependence with civil and political rights. In that resolution, the Commission underscored the fact that the document had served to consolidate the Commission's approach to the necessary integration of macroeconomic aspects, institutions and regulatory systems with the operation of factor markets and micro-economic performance. It urged the secretariat to continue to deepen its analysis of the following issues: social policy as an integrative force; responsible macroeconomic policy based on a longer time-horizon; reinforcement of citizenship, understood as the effective participation of social actors, as an essential tool for strengthening social cohesion; the interrelationship between the development agendas of the countries and the policies associated with globalization process; and the construction of a stable, predictable financial system and its linkage with social development.